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ESSAY

CONCERNING

Church Government

Out of the Excellent

WRITINGS

OF

CALVIN & BEZA

By A. C. M. A.



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Y A 2 2 E
To the Moderat
PRESBYTERIAN.

VV^E Ere *riques* and *Reſentments* kindled unto *Charity*, *Prejudices* of *Education*, and *Worldly Deſigns* laid aſide, *Religion* preferred to *Intereſt*, and the power of *Godlineſs* to that of *Dominion*; then all the powers of *Hell*, endued with the *Phariſee* himſelf, ſhould never make *Proteſtants* of this *Reformed Church* of *Scotland* divide about matters of *Eccleſiaſtick Government*: It is clear to a *Demonſtration*, (ſuch as the *Nature* of the thing requires) that a *Preſident Episcopacy* hath the *Divine Inſtitution*, the *Apoſtolick practice*, the *Reception* of the *Primitive Church*, and the *Solemn Approbation* of a *Revelation from Heaven*: This *Demonſtration* (from *Calvin* and *Bera* themſelves) is the matter of this *ESSAY*; Which I heartfully offer to your *Censure* and *Ingenuity*; Adding, my *Heartly Prayers*, That, *Our Zion* may at length be at *Unity* within her ſelf, ſerving one *Lord*, according to one *Rule*, with one *Heart* and *Mouth*, to the *Glory of GOD*, the joy of *Heaven*, and all good *Men* upon *Earth*; The true *happineſs* of the *King* and *People*; The good contentment of our *Brethren* abroad; And the *melancholy diſpleaſure* of the *Adverſary*.

DEFINITIONS

The Power of Ordination is that Right in the Government of the Church, to separat. Persons duly Qualified, unto the Holy Ministry of the Gospel.

and not the whole multitude laid on hands on their Ministers at Ordinations.

The power of Jurisdiction is that Right in the Governours of the Church, to make Canons which are wanting, or to execute these already made, for the Regulation of Church-Members.

such Equality among the Ministers of the Church, but that some One was Pre-eminent in Authority and Council.

The President Bishop, is he, who from his Office Pre-eminent to other Ministers, is invested with a fixed Power of (a) Ordination, Regulated by Canons, and of (b) Jurisdiction, ballanced by assisting Ministers.

other Ministers with him, laid on hands on Timothy. (b) Calvin: 1st. lib. 4. cap. 4. sect. 1. What ever parts the Consul had in the Senate the same Office did the Bishop always sustain in the Meeting of Presbyters.

The Angel of any Church Representative, is the President Bishop over the other Ministers, within the respective Diocess, Province, or Patriarchat.

whom he becometh, especially to be admonished, touching those matters, and by him both the Rest of his fellow Collegues, and the whole Church likewise, 24. vers. 1. But unto you, that is, unto you the Angel the President, and the Assembly of your Collegues, and to the Rest, that is, to the whole Flock.

Calvin: 1st. lib. 4. cap. 4. sect. 2. This is to be considered, that only the Pastors,

Calvin: 1st. lib. 4. cap. 4. sect. 2. We learn indeed from this place, that there was no

(a) Calvin: 1st. lib. 4. cap. 4. sect. 1. Paul himself declares, That he alone, and no

24. vers. 1. To the Angel, that is, To the President,

POSTULATUMS.

Calvin, Luke 10. chap. 1. verse 16.

After the Apostles had returned to Christ, he sent out more secundarie Preachers: And this is the great commendation of the outward Ministry; That Christ Declares, that whatsoever honour is given to his faithful Preachers, is given to himself.

That the 70 Disciples (from among whom Matthias was called, to be ordained one of the 12 Apostles) were persons in holy Orders in the Ministry.

Calvin, 1 Tim. chap. 4. v. 10.

(a) Timothy was not one of the common Ministry, but one next to the Apostles, who is the frequent absence of Paul, was in his place.

Titus had the charge, that he should constitute a certain Room of Church Polite and Discipline; and likewise ordain Ministers over the Church.

Calvin Inst.

Lib. 4. cap. 4.

Lib. 2. Presby.

one of these number.

In all the cities, chose one, to whom especially they gave the title of Bishop; lest from a Party, as used to be, Divisions might arise.

Jerom says, at Alexandria from Mark the Evangelist to Herasius and Dionysius, Presbyters always placed one in a pre-eminent degree, whom they called a Bishop.

Revel.

chap. 2. vers. 26.

My works, that is, he who shall faithfully perform the work laid upon him.

For he bestows the Assembly of Pastors in the person of the Presidents, to whom he promitteth Victory against all the wicked, if he rely and trust in the Authority and Power of that true and only head of the Church.

That for the avoiding of Schism, the Primitive Church retained the Government of one single person, pre-eminent in Office, unto other Ministers.

In all the cities, chose one, to whom especially they gave the title of Bishop; lest from a Party, as used to be, Divisions might arise. *Jerom* says, at Alexandria from Mark the Evangelist to Herasius and Dionysius, Presbyters always placed one in a pre-eminent degree, whom they called a Bishop.

That the 7 Angels of the 7 Churches, written unto, in the Book of Revelation, are encouraged against all the devices of the ungodly, upon condition of their continuing faithful in their Administrations.

POSTE

AXIOMS

AXIOMS.

The Regular Call of any Minister already ordained, is from an Office of an inferior, to another of a Pre-eminence Station.

After the death of the Apostles, it was the constant custom that from the Order of Deacons the Presbyters were chosen; therefore commonly they have expounded this place, of the Advancement to a Superior Degree.

The Pre-eminence in any Office, includes a proportioned Jurisdiction, over the Officers who are under them.

Calvin,

lib. 4. cap. 19.

Because in order

to two Centu-

ries of the Order of

Deacons (by Advan-

ced) to a Superior

Degree, by the

Order of the

Presbytery.

See Deinit.

only in 2. III.

The Divine Right is manifest in that Ecclesiastick Government which is instituted by Christ, continued by his Apostles, retained in the Primitive Church, and approved from Heaven by Revelation; in subserviency to any end, wherein the well-being of Christianity is highly concerned.

Calvin. Inst.

lib. 4. cap. 6.

sect. 1. We

have not be-

fore touched

upon the pri-

mary of the

Roman. See

the

original from

CHRIST'S

institution, nor

the custom of

the Ancient

Church, as the

other Offices

have done, (viz.

Bish. Presb. and

Deacons cap. 4. sect. 1.)

mentioned already.

The want of that Government in the Church, which is of Divine Right, is pernicious to the Gospel, and Christian Religion.

Calvin. Inst.

lib. 4. cap. 8.

sect. 2. For nei-

ther the light

and heat of the

sun, meat or drink

are so nourishing

and sustaining this

present life, as the

Apostolick and

Ministerial Office,

for preserving of

a Church upon

Earth.

PRO

PROPOSITION I.

*The twelve Apostles were President Bishops over the 70 Disciples.
Demonstration.*

THe President Bishop is he who from his Office Pre-eminent to other Ministers, is invested with a fixed power of Ordination, regulated by Canons, and of Jurisdiction ballanced by assisting Ministers; [by Definition III.] But in respect to the 70 Disciples, who were all in the holy Ministry, (by Postulatum I.) and from among whom Matthias was called to be of the 12. by Postulatum I.] The sacred College of the Apostles had a fixed Pre-eminence (by Axiom I.) Invested with the power of Ordination, regulated by Canons, [by Postulatum I. and Definition I.] And of Jurisdiction ballanced by assisting Ministers; [by Axiom II.] therefore the 12 Apostles were President Bishops over the 70 Disciples, which was the thing to be Demonstrated.

PROPOSITION II.

*Timothy was a President Bishop over the Church of the Ephesians;
and Titus over the Church of the Cretians.
Demonstration.*

These are President Bishops who are from their Office Pre-eminent to other Ministers, invested with a fixed power of Ordination, regulated by Canons, and of Jurisdiction ballanced by assisting Ministers; [by Definition III.] But Timothy in the Church of Ephesus, and Titus in the Church of Crete, from their Offices had a pre-eminence over other Ministers, invested with a fixed power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, regulated by Canons, and ballanced by assisting Ministers; [by Postulatum II.] Therefore Timothy was a President Bishop over the Church of the Ephesians, and Titus over the Church of the Cretians. Which was to be Demonstrated.

PROPOSITION III.

*The Fathers of the Primitive Church were President Bishops.
Demonstration.*

The Primitive Church retained the Government of one single person, pre-eminent in Office unto other Ministers; [by Postulatum III.] But the pre-eminence

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in any Office includes a proportioned Jurisdiction over the Officers who are under them; (by Axiom II.) and the power of Jurisdiction is fixed in the President Bishop; (by Definition III.) therefore the Fathers of the Primitive Church were President Bishops. Which was to be Demonstrated.

PROPOSITION IV.

The President Episcopacy is approved by Christ in the Book of the Revelation.

Demonstration.

The 7. Angels of the 7. Churches written unto by St. John, in the Book of the Revelation, are incouraged against all the devices of the ungodly, upon condition of their continuing faithful in their Administrations; (by Postulatum IV.) But these Angels were President Bishops over other Ministers within their respective Churches; (by Definition IV.) Therefore the President Episcopacy is approved by CHRIST, in the Book of the Revelation. Which was to be Demonstrated.

COROLLARIE I.

The President Episcopacy is of Divine Right.

Demonstration.

The Divine Right is manifest, in that Ecclesiastick Government which is instituted by Christ, and continued by his Apostles, retained in the Primitive Church, and approved by Christ, by a Revelation from Heaven, for subserviency to any end, wherein the welbeing of Christianity is nighly concerned; (by Axiom III.) But the President Episcopacy was instituted by Christ; (by Proposition I.) Continued by his Apostles, (by Proposition II.) Retained in the Primitive Church; (by Proposition III.) And approved by Christ, by a Revelation from Heaven; (by Proposition IV.) For avoiding of Schism, wherein the well-being of Christianity is nighly concerned; (by Postulatum III.) Therefore the President Episcopacy is of Divine Right. Which was to be Demonstrated.

CORO.